



# NEWS RELEASE

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## Oklahoma Main Street Announces Award Winners

OKLAHOMA CITY – The Oklahoma Main Street Center has announced the winners of the program’s annual statewide awards competition. Finalists were recognized and the winners announced during the 33rd annual Main Street Awards Banquet, May 2, in Oklahoma City.

Programs across the state competed in 23 award categories representing the “Four Points” of the Main Street Approach: Organization, Promotion, Economic Vitality and Design. Panels of outside judges for each point reviewed the entries and determined the winners. In addition, the Program of the Year and the Watonga Bob Shoemaker Award (Program Director of the Year) were also recognized.

“These awards truly showcase the hard work and efforts by so many in our local programs,” said Buffy Hughes, Director of the Oklahoma Main Street Center. “Through the unique and time-honored events, the volunteers, the restoration efforts and all the small businesses that make our downtowns and historic commercial districts so great, these awards prove that Main Streets across Oklahoma are alive and thriving. Congratulations to all the top three finishers and the winners.”

In 2011, the Program Director of the Year award was renamed in honor of “Watonga Bob” Shoemaker. In the world of Main Street, people tend to lose their last names once becoming a Main Street Director. This was certainly true of “Watonga Bob.” Always an informal guy and on a first-name-basis as soon as he met you, Bob Shoemaker took on the program director position later in life after a successful business career. Bob passed away suddenly in 2010 but not before leaving an indelible mark in the Oklahoma Main Street world because of his work ethic, service to his community and promotion of the Main Street Program. The finalists for the award this year included Maci Graves, Ponca City Main Street; Jennie LaFave, Pryor Main Street; and Cindy Lawrence, Sapulpa Main Street. Jennie LaFave of Pryor received the top honor this year.

To determine the Main Street Program of the Year, the Oklahoma Main Street Center measures various quality ratings for each local Main Street program. These include meeting the 10

Standards of National Accreditation and other activities such as attending the annual awards banquet and additional trainings, timely submission of Main Street Award nominations and reinvestment reports, etc. This award is a mark of program excellence, and measured involvement within the program. The 2023 Main Street Program of the Year is Tahlequah Main Street.

The 2023 Point award winners are:

**ORGANIZATION:**

Premier Partner

Enid – Park Avenue Thrift

Best Main Street Community Education Campaign

Yukon – Yukon’s Best History & Display Contest

Outstanding Community Engagement Effort

Ponca City – Ice on the Plaza

Main Street Hero

Ardmore – Matt Hoage

Best Creative Fundraising Effort

Ponca City – Ice on the Plaza

Outstanding Public Official

Pryor – Larry Lees

**PROMOTION:**

Premier Special Event Under 1,000 Attendees

Stockyards City – “Oklahoma’s Best Beef” Competition

Premier Special Event Over 1,000 Attendees

Ponca City – Ice on the Plaza

Best Main Street Retail Event

Tahlequah – Ladies Night Out

Outstanding Image Promotion

Tahlequah – Community Rebrand

Creative New Event

Sapulpa – Route 66 Christmas Chute

**DESIGN:**

Best Placemaking Project

Ardmore – Depot Park

Best Interior Design Project Under \$25,000

Woodward – Persimmon Creek Gifts

Best Interior Design Project Over \$25,000

Okmulgee – The Merc on Morton Loft

Best Façade Rehabilitation Over \$10,000

Perry – 1893 Axe House & Red Earth D’Signs

Best Visual Merchandising

Sapulpa – Gasoline Alley Classics

Best Building/Business Branding

Altus – Perry & Co.

**ECONOMIC VITALITY:**

Best Adaptive Reuse Project Under \$25,000

Ponca City – My Media Matters

Best Adaptive Reuse Project Over \$25,000

Sapulpa – Gasoline Alley Classics

Outstanding Entrepreneurial Endeavor

Altus – The Studio

Outstanding Business Expansion

Stockyards City – National Saddlery

Best New Business

Ponca City – The Farm House Kids Co.

Business of the Year

Yukon – The Arrangement

For more information about the Oklahoma Main Street Center visit [okcommerce.gov/mainstreet](http://okcommerce.gov/mainstreet).

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